



TROJAN TODAY

YOUR SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SOURCE FOR NEWS AND EVENTS | DECEMBER 2017



Highland teams take first! Robotrix winners heading to state tournament!

Both Warren Elementary School teams walked away from the FIRST Lego League Indiana Qualifying Tournament as winners.

Although robotics remain central to the competition, all teams are issued the same challenge – find fixes to real-world problems. For 2017, the robotics goal is to find innovative and impactful solutions that are successful in conserving water.

Judges were impressed with both teams. Art Teacher Chrissy Davis' Robotacons developed a better washer to reduce plumbing leaks. Principal JJ Boylan's Team Robotrix created a phone app that monitors water usage for everyday tasks – like brushing your teeth and taking a shower instead of a bath. The app provides an instant read on water use and how it helps or hurts the planet.

Robotacons received first place in Innovative Solutions while the Robotrix performance earned the team a spot in the state tournament Dec. 9 in Ft. Wayne. ♦

"This tournament ... is about achieving and sharing what our kids learned with other teams. It's called Core Values and that makes this all about cooperative learning and sharing." **JJ Boylan**



ROBOTICS

Please join us in congratulating these amazing students who dedicate many hours after school and on weekends to perfect their craft.

ROBOTACONS

Jackson Baer
Christopher Holmquist
Lila Holmquist
Diego Medina
Joseph Stephan
Michael Susko
James Tauber
Barbara Trejo
Lana Zahabi
Head Coach
Chrissy Davis
Asst. Coach
Angela Holmquist

ROBOTRIX

Cheyenne Barton
Ayden Brown
Dario Garcia
Dakota Kowalik
Ethan Liden
Noah Onohan
Aiden Wilson
Gavin Wilson
Jacob Wise

INFORMATION

Visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=s57cO_x4lco&feature=share to learn more about the Robotrix app.

High school forms volunteer tutoring partnership with Suburban Bible

One hour after school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, a small group of volunteers from Suburban Bible Church ventures over to the high school to provide one-on-one tutoring.

The program is designed for students who need assistance passing the End-of-Course proficiency test that is part of the ISTEP assessment.

With five students consistently attending the free sessions, High School Principal Pat Weil and Associate Pastor Jeremy Owens agree the new program seems to be working.

"We'll know more when these students take the test again," said Owens, who also substitute teaches at Highland. "We started small, but would love to see the program grow."

A partnership between the School Town and Suburban Bible has been in place since the church opened its doors to Highland after the 1968 Christmas Day fire. Decades later, it was Highland schools that stepped in with an offer of meeting space after the church flooded.

"Our students are benefiting from this partnership," Weil said. "We are delighted the church came to us with this offer of help." ♦

TUTORING SESSIONS

Sessions are open to any student who needs help retesting for ISTEP.

WHEN: 3:05 to 4:05 p.m. Tuesdays and 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesdays

WHERE: Highland High Media Center

INFO: Call Dr. Weil at (219) 922-5610 or email at pweil@highland.k12.in.us.

ADMINISTRATION

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SCHOOL BOARD

Robert Kuva, President

Carol Green Fraley, Vice President

Patrick Krull, Secretary

Vicki Crowe, Member

Luanne Jurczak, Member

The school board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the Administration Building, 9145 Kennedy Avenue, Highland.

INFO: Visit hhs.highland.k12.in.us for the latest information, including meeting agendas, school policies, board mission, beliefs and values.

School Town of Highland receives 'B' as its final letter grade for school accountability

The School Town of Highland has received a "B" grade for the district, one of 62 percent of all state school corporations that received an "A" or "B" during its most recent assessment.

Superintendent Brian Smith said he and district leaders are drilling down on each of the factors that goes into Indiana's accountability system to see where they can improve.

"Once we distill the data, we will be in a better position to know where we need to focus our energies," he said.

Indiana school districts have been operating with a performance-based accountability system since 1999. In 2015, the State Board of Education established new metrics for its student-centered accountability system. The metrics went into effect beginning with the assessment of the 2015-16 school year. ❖

MAKING THE GRADE

District grades are calculated based on performance, growth and multiple measures. Here's a look at the School Town of Highland over the years:

| SCHOOL YEAR | GRADE | POINTS |
|-------------|-------|--------|
| 2016-17 | B | 84.4 |
| 2015-16 | B | 88.7 |
| 2014-15 | A | - |
| 2013-14 | A | - |
| 2012-13 | B | - |
| 2011-12 | C | - |
| 2010-11 | A | - |

Above state average performance:

71% of elementary students passed the English/Language Arts assessment, **3.6%** better than the state average.

41.3% of high school students passed the mathematics assessment, **5.5%** better than the state average.

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

"We have so much to be thankful for ... and just as many reasons to be excited about what 2018 brings"

As we enter this season when our students are filled with anticipation and excitement, I have to tell you the adults in the room are feeling the same.

We have so much to be thankful for and just as many reasons to be excited about what 2018 will bring.

Four months into the 2017-18 academic year, each of our six schools are a hive of activity even more so than usual.

Like the super heroes they are, our educators spend their days teaching our children the basics before switching gears to oversee after-school clubs and enrichment activities that provide another level of learning.

Our band, orchestra and choir directors are leading the charge, preparing for the upcoming elementary, middle and



high school concerts.

These musicians – accomplished in their own right – work overtime sharing their talents with our students.

The result is a series of concerts that provide a glimpse of the talent we have in our midst. These students and their teachers invest hundreds of hours in getting every performance just right. It is their gift to us.

Please join us as we tap our toes and raise our voices in thanksgiving this holiday season. ❖

Brian Smith
Superintendent
School Town of Highland



Fostering and facilitating excellence in education

HIGHLAND EDUCATION FOUNDATION AWARDS \$9,000 IN SCHOOL GRANTS

A week after retiring from teaching in Illinois, Judi Caddick and her daughter, Southridge teacher Beth Harwood, met with Superintendent Brian Smith to discuss plans to create a foundation that would enhance education in the classroom.

Within months, the Highland residents established the Highland Education Foundation.

A scant two years later, Caddick, Harwood and eight other board members are awarding the fruits of their fund-raising efforts to Highland educators.

From Education Lego Simple Machine Sets, leveled readers for kindergarten teachers and manipulatives for math labs, the foundation provided \$9,000 in funding to amplify education during its first round of grants.

Smith said the success of the Highland Education Foundation is directly related to the dedication of its members and the generosity of the community.

"We were excited when Judi and Beth organized the foundation," he said. "We had no idea they would be extending grants already."

Caddick, who serves as president, said the group raises money for innovative projects not funded through the school district.

"It is gratifying to see that we have been able to positively impact the education of more than 1,000 Highland students," she said.

UPCOMING FUND-RAISER

If you're been channeling your inner Kelly Clarkson, get practicing for Highland Education Foundation's first-ever Lip Sync Contest fund-raiser at **7 p.m. Feb. 2** in Monbeck Auditorium.

It's the latest effort to raise funds for Highland students. From a bevy of events and donations from individuals and local businesses, HEF Board President Judi Caddick said the group raised \$16,000 during their first year.

With no paid staff, board members are actively involved in every aspect of the foundation. "As we grow, we are looking to increase the number of board members from 10 to 13," she said. "If you have a passion for education and experience in marketing, accounting or event planning, please contact us."

INFO: Call Judi at 219.644.7770 or email highlandedufdn@gmail.com



Munster-Highland Tri Kappa offering scholarships for college students

Did you know Tri Kappa awards nearly \$500,000 annually to Indiana college students?

"Our area boasts numerous talented college students who would qualify for these scholarships," said Stephanie Waldron, scholarship chair for Munster-Highland Tri Kappa. "All they need to do is apply."

Opportunities include:

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Twelve \$1,000 **Academic Scholarships** will be awarded to students enrolled in a baccalaureate or graduate program, having completed at least one academic year.

KEY SCHOLARSHIPS

Two \$1,000 **Key Scholarships** will be awarded to students who have no previous degree beyond high school and have had a lapse in their education for at least 5 years. Students enrolled in an accredited school offering an associate or baccalaureate degree, and completed at least one semester, may apply.

FINE ARTS SCHOLARSHIPS

Two \$1,000 **Fine Arts Scholarships** will be awarded to students majoring in art, dance, drama or music. To apply, students must be enrolled in an accredited baccalaureate or graduate program, having completed at least one academic year.

MUSIC AWARD

The \$1,000 Twanette Nutter Fleming Music Award is awarded to a student enrolled in a fully accredited course of study leading to a degree to teach music in a school and having completed at least one academic year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Applications, which are available at the Highland High School guidance department, must be received by **February 9**. For more information, please email Stephanie Waldron at mhtkscholarships@yahoo.com.



holly: Jolly

Between its bands, orchestras and choirs, the school's dedicated musical talent delight the community with dozens of performances each year – none more anticipated than the holiday concerts.

It is the one time of the year when percussion, woodwinds, brass and strings gather on stage for a one-of-a-kind holiday showcase.

Now in his second year as Director of Orchestras, Benjamin Leonard-White has found the home he was seeking at a school district that values the arts as an important accompaniment to academics, sports and extracurriculars.

"Our kids are hard workers and embrace innovative ideas to take orchestra performances into the community, such as our very own Camerata appearances at gallery openings and other small group settings," Leonard-White said. "I can't even describe how awesome they are."

Next up? A trip to perform at Disney World this spring. Orchestra and choir students are responsible for travel, accommodations and food. A Town Theatre Fund donation is covering the cost of a recording industry workshop where students create their own recording synced to a Disney film clip.



Orchestra members, above, are eager to perform for the community at the annual Christmas concert.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Join us as we celebrate the sounds of the season with instrumentals provided by our high school and middle school bands and orchestras.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Dec. 19

WHERE: Monbeck Auditorium at Highland High School, 9135 Erie St.

ADMISSION: Free

INFO: Call (219) 922-5610 or email bleonard@highland.k12.in.us.

HOLIDAY CHORALE

The high school and middle school choirs will rock the auditorium as they perform your favorite holiday tunes – and ours – accompanied by the lively sounds of the school's very own jazz band.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Dec. 13

WHERE: Monbeck Auditorium at Highland High School, 9135 Erie St.

ADMISSION: Free

INFO: Call (219) 922-5610

